

# SELECTING A NURSING HOME

Make copies of this checklist and take it with you when visiting a prospective nursing home. Some of the listed items suggest questions to ask of staff, while others are based on your observations.

## Basic Information

**YES NO** The nursing home is actively involved in quality improvement and culture change initiatives

**YES NO** Currently accepting new residents

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of current openings

\_\_\_\_\_ Waiting period for admission

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of Medicare-certified beds (important following a hospital stay, if skilled nursing care is needed)

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of Medicaid-certified beds (important if financial resources are limited or become limited in the future)

## Environment

**YES NO** The nursing home is free of lingering odors

**YES NO** The nursing home appears clean and well-kept

**YES NO** Noise levels are generally quiet

**YES NO** Resident rooms are personalized with a resident's belongings

**YES NO** The temperature and ventilation feel comfortable

**YES NO** There are comfortable visiting areas for friends and family

**YES NO** There are outdoor areas for residents to use

**YES NO** The nursing home has a home-like feel

## Choice

**YES NO** Residents have a choice of activities, including in the community

**YES NO** Baths and showers are available at different times during the day

**YES NO** Residents have a choice in meal times and food options

**YES NO** Bed & waking times are flexible and based on resident preference

**YES NO** Residents and their families are encouraged to participate in quarterly resident care plan meetings and reasonable accommodations are offered

## Residents

**YES NO** The residents appear clean, properly dressed and well-groomed

**YES NO** Residents appear satisfied and comfortable

**YES NO** There are procedures in place to safeguard resident possessions

**YES NO** Residents appear to be engaged in meaningful activities

**YES NO** Residents are encouraged to be active participants in their care & their decisions are honored, including their end-of-life choices

## Staff

**YES NO** The staff interact with residents in a courteous and respectful manner

**YES NO** The nursing home does background checks on all staff  
**YES NO** The staff respond promptly to calls for assistance  
**YES NO** There appear to be a sufficient number of staff on all shifts, including nights and weekends  
**YES NO** The staff seem competent and act in a professional manner  
**YES NO** The staff were able to answer my questions satisfactorily  
**YES NO** The staff are cheerful and appear to enjoy their work

#### **Nutrition**

**YES NO** Staff assist residents who need help in eating their meals  
**YES NO** The food smells and looks appetizing  
**YES NO** The food is served at an appropriate temperature  
**YES NO** Nutritious snacks are available during the day and evening  
**YES NO** The dining room environment is pleasant, social and relaxing  
**YES NO** Fresh water is available at meals and in each resident's room

#### **Safety**

**YES NO** The hallways are clear, well-lit and free of clutter  
**YES NO** Spills and other accidents are cleaned up promptly  
**YES NO** Bathroom grab bars and other assistive equipment is available  
**YES NO** Residents are offered preventative health care (e.g. flu shots)  
**YES NO** The nursing home has corrected any deficiencies identified on its past state inspections

**In order to get an accurate picture of a nursing home, it is important to make at least two visits. It is recommended that you or your loved one visit on a weekday, in order to ask questions of the management staff. A second visit during the evening or weekend will allow you to observe the facility during a time when there are typically less management staff on site.**